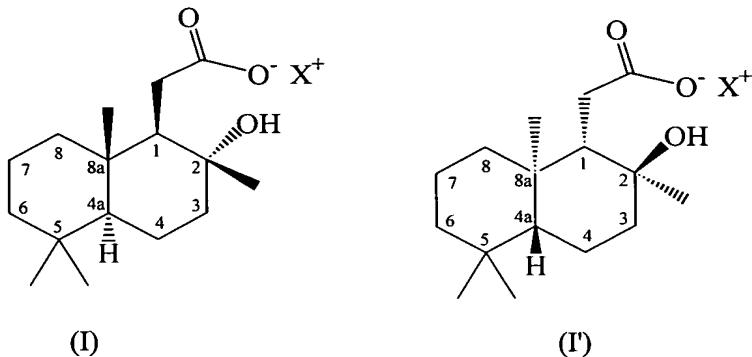


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all previous versions and listings of claims in this application.

1. (original) A compound of formula (I) or (I')



wherein X represents an optically active enantiomer of (2-hydroxy-1-methyl-2-phenylethyl)methylammonium.

2. (original) A process for obtaining a compound of formula (I) or (I'), as defined in claim 1, said process being characterized in that

- it comprises the treatment of [(1RS,2RS,4aSR,8aSR)-2-hydroxy-2,5,5,8a-tetramethyldecahydronaphthalen-1-yl]acetic acid with an optically active enantiomer of 2-(methylamino)-1-phenyl-1-propanol, or the treatment of an alkaline salt of [(1RS,2RS,4aSR,8aSR)-2-hydroxy-2,5,5,8a-tetramethyldecahydronaphthalen-1-yl]acetic acid with an ammonium salt obtainable by the reaction of an optically active enantiomer of 2-(methylamino)-1-phenyl-1-propanol with an acid having a pK_a below 5; and
- said treatment is performed in a solvent wherein the compounds of formula (I) or (I') have different solubilities.

3. (original) A process according to claim 2, wherein the solvent is a C₆-C₉ aromatic solvent, a C₆-C₁₀ petroleum fraction or hydrocarbon, a C₁-C₂ halogenated solvent, a C₄-C₁₀ ether, a C₃-C₁₀ ester, a C₃-C₁₀ alcohol or mixtures thereof.

4. (original) A process according to claim 3, wherein the solvent is selected from the group consisting of anhydrous tetrahydrofuran, toluene, xylene, benzene or cyclohexane.

5. (original) A process according to claim 2, wherein the optically active enantiomer of 2-(methylamino)-1-phenyl-1-propanol is (1R,2R)-2-(methylamino)-1-phenyl-1-propanol or (1S,2S)-2-(methylamino)-1-phenyl-1-propanol.

6. (original) A process according to claim 2, wherein the acid having a pK_a below 5 is selected from the group consisting of HX , wherein X is a halide, H_2SO_4 , HNO_3 , H_3PO_4 , HPF_6 , HBF_4 , $HClO_4$, C_1-C_{10} sulphonic acids, and C_1-C_{10} mono-, di- or tri-carboxylic acid.

7. (cancelled)

8. (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) A process for obtaining (+)-sclareolide or (-)-sclareolide which comprises treating a compound of formula (I) or (I'), respectively, as defined as in claim 1, with an acid having a pK_a below 5 and by a thermal treatment at a temperature comprised between $60^{\circ}C$ and $150^{\circ}C$.

10. (cancelled)

11. (cancelled)

12. (cancelled)

13. (new) A process for obtaining (+)-sclareolide or (-)-sclareolide said process being characterized in that it comprises

- I) the hydrolysis of (\pm) -sclareolide into a corresponding [(1RS,2RS,4aSR,8aSR)-2-hydroxy-2,5,5,8a-tetramethyldecahydronaphthalen-1-yl]acetic acid or a salt thereof,
- II) treatment of [(1RS,2RS,4aSR,8aSR)-2-hydroxy-2,5,5,8a-tetramethyldecahydronaphthalen-1-yl]acetic acid with an optically active enantiomer of 2-(methylamino)-1-

phenyl-1-propanol, or the treatment of an alkaline salt of [(1RS,2RS,4aSR,8aSR)-2-hydroxy-2,5,5,8a-tetramethyldecahydronaphthalen-1-yl]acetic acid with an ammonium salt obtainable by the reaction of an optically active enantiomer of 2-(methylamino)-1-phenyl-1-propanol with an acid having a pK_a below 5; wherein either treatment is performed in a solvent to obtain a compound of formula (I) or (I'), respectively, according to claim 1; and

III) treating the compound of formula (I) or (I'), respectively, with an acid having a pK_a below 5 and by a thermal treatment at a temperature comprised between 60°C and 150°C.

14. (new) A process for obtaining a compound of formula (I) or (I'), as defined in claim 1, said process being characterized in that

- a) it comprises the treatment of [(1RS,2RS,4aSR,8aSR)-2-hydroxy-2,5,5,8a-tetramethyldecahydronaphthalen-1-yl]acetic acid with an optically active enantiomer of 2-(methylamino)-1-phenyl-1-propanol, or the treatment of an alkaline salt of [(1RS,2RS,4aSR,8aSR)-2-hydroxy-2,5,5,8a-tetramethyldecahydronaphthalen-1-yl]acetic acid with an ammonium salt obtainable by the reaction of an optically active enantiomer of 2-(methylamino)-1-phenyl-1-propanol with an acid selected from the group consisting of HX, wherein X is a halide, H_2SO_4 , HNO_3 , H_3PO_4 , HPF_6 , HBF_4 , $HClO_4$, C_1-C_{10} sulphonic acids, and C_1-C_{10} mono-, di- or tri-carboxylic acid.; and
- b) said treatment is performed in a solvent selected from the group consisting of a C_6-C_9 aromatic solvent, a C_6-C_{10} petroleum fraction or hydrocarbon, a C_1-C_2 halogenated solvent, a C_4-C_{10} ether, a C_3-C_{10} ester, a C_3-C_{10} alcohol or mixtures thereof.